

SUBJECT: Revisions to 1994 House redistricting plan

COMMITTEE: Redistricting — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 9 ayes — D. Jones, Alvarado, Counts, Glaze, Hamric, Marchant, Seidlits, A. Smith, Wilson

1 nays — Schechter

1 absent — Moreno

WITNESSES: No public hearing

BACKGROUND: On November 12, 1991, the U.S. Justice Department objected to portions of HB 150, the House redistricting plan adopted by the Legislature during the 1991 regular session, for discriminating against Hispanic voters in violation of the federal Voting Rights Act. This action invalidated the entire plan. An attempt to adopt a new plan by means of a state court settlement was overridden when a three-judge federal panel adopted a different House redistricting plan to be used for the 1992 election only. Gov. Ann Richards called the Legislature into special session in January 1992 to adopt new legislative redistricting plans, and the Legislature enacted HB 1 (third called session), which includes the state court settlement district boundaries for use in elections in 1994 and the remainder of the decade; the HB 1 plan subsequently was precleared.

DIGEST: CSHB 1240 would make technical changes to the HB 1 House redistricting plan in Bexar, Harris and Dallas counties.

It also would move territory from District 146 to District 147 in Harris County. The bill would not affect members or districts for the 73rd Legislature.

CSHB 1240 would take immediate effect if approved by two-thirds of the members of each house.

SUPPORTERS SAY: CSHB 1240 would simply make some technical changes to eliminate some voting precincts that have no population. It also would return some

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territory previously in Rep. Edwards' District 147 from Rep. Coleman's District 146.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

This bill could be used as a vehicle for making substantive changes to HB 1 and reopen the redistricting controversy. The district lines for 1994 and beyond have been precleared under the Voting Rights Act and should not be altered without considerable justification.

NOTES:

The committee substitute added the changes to Districts 146 and 147 and provided that the changes would not affect districts for the 73rd Legislature.

Related bills include HB 170 by Craddick, which would move census blocks between Districts 129 and 144 in Harris County, HB 1797 by Krusee, which would shift census blocks in Districts 52 and 53, HB 2017 by Earley, which would shift census blocks in Districts 30, 31, 32, 33 34, 43 and 44, and HB 2508 by Willis, would move census blocks in Districts 89 through 98; all are pending in the House Redistricting Committee.